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A
S E R M O N

Preached before the
House of LORDS,

IN THE
Abbey - Church of *Westminster*,

On the 30th of *January*, 1711.

Being the Anniversary of the Martyrdom of
King CHARLES the First.

By the Right Reverend Father in GOD,
RICHARD, Lord Bishop of *Glocester*.

R. Willis

The Fourth Edition.

D U B L I N :

Reprinted by S. Powell, in *Copper-Alley* ; for
G. Risk, at the *Landon* in *Dames-street*, 1716.

Price Three Pence.



Die Martis xxxi^o Januarii, 1715.

O*rdere*d by the Lords Spiritual and
Temporal in Parliament Assembled,
That the Thanks of this House be, and are
hereby given to the Lord Bishop of Gloucester
for his Excellent Sermon Preached before
this House Yesterday in the Abbey-Church of
Westminster ; and he is hereby desired to
Print and Publish the same.

William Cowper.

Cler' Parliamentor'

P R O V. xxiv. 21.

*My Son, fear thou the Lord, and the King :
and meddle not with them that are given
to Change.*

THESE Words have frequently been the Subject of Discourses made upon this Day, and indeed they suggest to us the chief Uses that a Nation should make of that sad Calamity and horrid Wickedness which occasioned our meeting together upon it : but there is no Use so obvious, or so comprehensive in its Nature, as that in the latter part of my Text, *not to meddle with them that are given to Change.*

For in truth what was it that brought this Great Evil upon the Nation, but a fatal Desire to change, which by turns possessed almost all Parties in the Kingdom ? In the first place, Both the Court and the Church desired to change more than they should have done : the one by grasping at more Power than the Law allowed it, the other by going off from the Plainness and Simplicity of former Times ; by which, strong Prejudices were raised in the Nation against Both.

The Enemies, on the other side, of the Church and Crown, were quite giddy with the Desire of *Changing*, In the Church, instead of Reforming the Innovations they complained of, they abolished its Liturgy, and Canons, and Apostolical Form of Government, and that which had continued its Government from the first planting of Christianity among us. However, they could not agree to establish any thing in the room of it, but went

on in Mazes of Error and Enthusiasm, till things were brought to their old State again at the Restoration.

In the State, they that began the War desired to change, but they could not well tell what, or how far; till after some time a new Sert of Men came into their Places, who quickly changed the Monarchy into a Republick: That, in a little time after, was changed into a new kind of Tyranny, by a Protector and an Army. When that was ended, great Variety of new Projects succeeded one another, till the Nation quite weary with so many Changes, fixed at last upon its antient Foundation.

Thus as this Humour of Changing did by turns seize all Parties among us, so it ended in the Destruction of each of them one after another; and in the mean time brought infinite Calamities upon the Kingdom.

My Text therefore contains a wise piece of Advice to prevent these Evils, that we should not meddle with, or mix in our Counsels with those that are of an unquiet Humour, and that are projecting Changes in the Course of Government: but it seems especially intended against those, who project Changes by Rebellion; and to deter Men from it, it represents the sad Judgments it commonly brings upon the Actors both from God and the King. *My Son, says he, fear thou the Lord and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to Change.* And then in the next Verse it follows, *For their Calamity shall rise suddenly, and who knoweth the Ruin of them both?* that is, who knoweth the Ruin and Destruction that both God and the King may bring upon such wicked Persons?

With respect to the King, as there cannot be any greater Offence against him than the Crime of Rebellion, it striking direct'y both at his Throne and his Life; so there is no Crime that is more severely punished by the Laws and Customs of all Nations. and it is but rare that the Persons concerned do escape these Punishments, but that they either die in Battle, or afterwards by the hands

hands of the Executioner, or are at best forced to fly into foreign Lands, there to live in Poverty and Contempt; the Providence of God generally taking care, for the Good and Quiet of Mankind, that such wicked Attempts shall not prosper.

Rebellion is indeed as great a Crime against God, as it is against the King, because it is resisting his Ordinance; it being his Will and Pleasure declared both by the Voice of Nature and of Scripture, that Mankind ought to live under Government, and in consequence be subject to it. And therefore the Scripture tells us, that *he that resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and that they that resist, shall receive Damnation, or Judgments, to themselves, Rom, 13. 2.* And we are commanded to be *subject to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King as Supreme, or unto Governors, as unto those that are sent by him, for the Punishment of Evil-doers, and for the Praise of them that do well. 1 Pet. 2. 13.*

And besides the resisting of God's Ordinance, rebellions are highly injurious to our Fellow-Subjects, generally producing Rapine, and Plunder, and Devastation in a Country: and the Murder of great Numbers of People, whose Blood will cry to God for Vengeance upon Those who occasion the spilling of it.

And what still further aggravates this Crime is, that it is generally attended with Perjury, with deliberate and wilful Perjury; by which the guilty Persons do imprecate the Judgments of God upon themselves; and therefore have the greatest Reasons to fear his Judgments both in this World and the other.

But it may be ask'd, Is all Resistance whatsoever to be call'd Rebellion? Are all Governments in this respect alike? Have all Kings equal Power? And is the Condition of Government such, that People must in all Cases, tho' of never so great Difficulty and Danger, lie still, and patiently suffer themselves to be utterly undone by that Power that was design'd to protect them?

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It must be confessed, that in all common Times such Questions as these are much better let alone than answered either way : because if they are answered, one way, they tend to flatter Princes ; it may be, to the great Prejudice of their People first, and afterwards to their own Destruction : if they are answered the other, it will probably be call'd Sedition, and may sometimes tend to it, and make People more easily venture upon dangerous Experiments, that may disturb the World, and end in their own Ruin.

But since the Happy Revolution, that preserved our Religion and Liberties, and all that is dear to us, there is a Necessity of speaking more clearly out ; and therefore they that have been the most zealous Friends of the Government, have defended that Resistance that was then necessary to our Preservation, and by that have defended the Government it self : and on the contrary, the open Enemies of the Government have chiefly made use of the Doctrine of Absolute Non-Resistance, in order to over-turn it ; they have alledged the Authority of the Church of *England* ; they have often, to raise Odium, objected the horrible Fact of this Day, and paralleled it with the Revolution : by which, and other like Methods, they have perverted many of our Church, and made them join with Papists to raise a Rebellion, and to set up a Popish Pretender to the Throne of his Majesty.

I shall therefore first compare the two Cases, that of the *Revolution*, and that of the *Rebellion* against King *Charles* the First, and shew the difference between them ; and then I shall speak something to the Matter of Resistance in general.

As for the two Cases before us, it must be owned, that if Resistance be in all cases whatever against the Law of God, neither of them can be excused ; and this Kingdom, instead of thanking God upon the *Fifth of November* for our Deliverance, for *making all Opposition fall before* the then Prince of Orange, till He be-
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same our King, have reason to humble themselves before him for the National Guilt we then contracted; which, tho' not of so horrid a Nature as the other, yet was much more National, there being very few in the Kingdom, except the Papists, who did not either concur in the Resistance, or wish it Success: which was the Case at least of the chief of those Clergy and Laity that afterwards refused to take the Oaths.

As for King *Charles*, tho' he had many Personal Virtues, yet there were Irregularities in the Administration of Affairs during a great part of his Reign, which are not very proper to be repeated upon this Day: but whatever they were, they were all set right in a Parliamentary Way before the War broke out; and not only so, but he parted with many valuable Prerogatives for the Security of his People for the future: from which time he put himself in the right, and put them in the wrong, who were still pursuing him with unreasonable Demands. This therefore must make every Step of that War to be unlawful, but much more must it have been unlawful, to continue it so long after so many gracious Offers he made of Accommodation, and much more still for a Pack of Men, without any Legal Authority, to subvert the whole Frame of Government both in Church and State: But most of all horrible, for them who had not Authority to judge the least Man in *England*, to call their King before them as his proper Judges, to use Him with the greatest Indignities, and at last, in a barbarous manner, to condemn and execute him. I think nothing more need be said to shew the Wickedness of every Step of these Proceedings.

But as to his unhappy Son King *James*, in the first place, he openly professed a Religion, which of it self must make him a dangerous Enemy to a Protestant Country; a Religion which made it his Duty to give up to a Foreigner a great part of the Jurisdiction of the Crown: I mean the Jurisdiction which he had over the Church, and which could not indeed be exercised by himself, but
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with almost equal Danger to our Religion, which he must think himself bound in Conscience to destroy as soon as he could. And accordingly, by various Arts and Methods, he quickly set about it; and in order to secure himself in the Attempt, he raised an Army, and kept it up without Consent of Parliament in time of Peace, contrary to the Fundamental Priviledges of the Kingdom. He claimed a Power of dispensing with Laws, which, being made by the Common *Consent* and *Authority* of the Kingdom, as well as of the Crown, can neither be dispensed with nor altered, but by the same Common Consent that made them: And by this Dispensing Power he made Privy-Counsellors, Judges, Justices of Peace, and other Officers, who were not by Law capable of their Places, and whose Actions consequently were all null and void in the Execution of them, which of it self, had it gone on, must have left us in Confusion, and without any Government at all. No such Judge could legally Try any Cause, nor condemn any Criminal, nor such Justice of Peace imprison any Malefactor; and the Subjects of *England* could have had no Legal Justice or Protection: which would have been in truth dissolving the Government, and leaving every Man to do as he would, or could do, unless so far as he was hindred by mere Force.

I might name a great Number of Particulars more, such as the illegal taking away of Charters through the Kingdom, the High-Commission-Court, the Imprisoning Seven Bishops only for petitioning in a Case of plain Law, the turning out a whole College in *Oxford*, because they would not break their Oaths, and their Statutes, and putting Papists, against Law, in their room; with many other things of the same kind, tending directly to overturn our Religion and Laws. But I pass them all over, and would only further add, that when he saw his Protestant Army were not like to stand by him, to bring in Popery, nor turn Papist themselves, he did, by the same Dispensing Power, put Popish Officers in as fast as he
well

well could, and sent for great Numbers of Papists from abroad; and, had he had time fully to accomplish that Reform of his Army, we had then been at the Mercy of those, from whom we could expect nothing but the utmost Barbarity.

These things fill'd the Nation with Astonishment, and dismal Expectation of what was coming upon us; and therefore some of the Wisest and the Greatest Men we had, both in Church and State, privately invited the *Prince of Orange* over to our Assistance.

When King *James* heard that the *Prince* was coming, he gave the Nation good Words, and began to redress some of the Illegal Things that he had done; but as soon as he heard that the *Prince's* Fleet was dispersed by a Storm, and that probably he could not come that Winter, he put a stop to all Pretences for Reformation, and by that to our Hopes of ever seeing our Grievances redressed but by Force. However, soon after the *Prince* did come, and many of all Ranks and Qualities declared for him; and the general Desire of the Nation was a *Free Parliament*, to set Matters right without Bloodshed.

This King *James* himself for some time seemed to come into, and Writs were ordered for it; but on a sudden he changed his Purpose, and first sent away the Queen, and him whom he called his Son, into *France*, and soon after followed himself; threw the Great Seal into the *Thames*, left us in Confusion, and without any Government at all.

What could the Nation do under these sad Circumstances, but either fight it out with one another, for the sake of a Prince who had governed them so, and left them so as King *James* had done; or else in a peaceable manner to settle things as well as they could, being left without any Legal Authority over them? They chose this latter way, as being the most Reasonable, indeed the only Reasonable Way they
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could take. A Convention of the Estates of the Kingdom was called together, as well as could be in a Country which had no Legal Authority among them ; and which by consequence, when met, had no Legal Superior. They upon mature Consideration declared, that King *James* by governing them in the manner he had done, and leaving them afterwards in such Confusion, had *Abdicated* the Government : And then they settled the Crown in the manner we all know. As to the Pretended Son of King *James*, they said nothing of him ; for which we may conceive, they had these Reasons.

In the first place, that both He and the Persons chiefly concerned in the Affair of his Birth, were sent beyond Sea ; so that the Matter could not be examined into, which might have been, and we have no reason to doubt would have been done, had King *James* and the proper Persons concerned staid in *England*.

And in the next place, because, whatever his Birth was, he was not then in the power of the Nation ; we could not have had him for our King, tho' we had never so much desired it. And the Confusion of the Nation requiring an immediate Settlement, it was not fit to say any thing of him.

I have now hinted at the chief Reasons we may suppose the Nation went upon in this great Affair ; and if every thing in it was not agreeable to the common Legal Forms, we have this to say, That it was not possible, That it was a Case of Necessity, and necessity is superior to all Law, and a Law to it self. And therefore if what was done was reasonable and fit for wise Men to do, it then must be Lawful and Rightful in the sight of God ; and all that we have done since, with respect to our present Happy Settlement, be the Effects of a Lawful and Rightful Government. I would only add this one thing, that the Nation in that whole Proceeding did not act like Men that were given to Change : No
Change

Change was made, but what was just necessary for our Settlement in Peace and Quiet: No overturning of the Church or the Monarchy, but both remain still upon their ancient Foundations; and I pray God they may remain so throughout all Ages.

I now proceed to speak something concerning the Lawfulness or Unlawfulness of Resisting Princes, in such Cases as that I have mentioned. And here I would chiefly observe, that so far as we are concerned in it, it cannot be determined by any Doctrine, either of the Scripture, or of the Church of *England*; but must be determined by the Nature of Government in general, and by the Nature of our own Constitution in particular.

1. In the first place, the Doctrine of the Cross is much pleaded in this Cause: and it must be owned, that the Duty of giving up all we have, and our Lives too, rather than deny Christ or any of his Truths, is a plain Doctrine of the Scriptures; and that we ought to do this, when it shall please God to call us to it, with great Patience, and Meekness, and Resignation to the Will of God. This requires a Temper made up of many noble Virtues and Graces; A great Contempt of the World, the living by Faith, Dependence upon God, Humility and Charity, and the like: and where all these are, tho a Man should be under some Mistake as to the Measures of exercising of them, yet they must render such a Person amiable in the sight both of God and Men. But on the contrary, if this Doctrine of the Cross be only talked of, when none of these Graces appear; if Ambition and a worldly Spirit appear in the Proposers; if it be joined with bitter Revilings and uncharitable Censures, with Lyes and Calumny, with Slander and Reproach, with Discontent for the least Pressure upon themselves, or merely because they cannot have their Will upon others: all Talk in such Persons of the Doctrine of the Cross,

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must either be Faction or Hypocrisy, and shews only what they would have other People quietly suffer, without bringing the Matter Home to their own Case.

2. In the second place, I would take notice, that this Doctrine of patient suffering even the greatest Pressures brought upon our selves, does not come up to the Case in question. It is readily granted, that no private Discontent, no private Injury will justify a Man in resisting Government, and disturbing the Peace of the World : but the question is, what a Man may lawfully do, out of Love to his Country, out of Love to many Millions of People, who are concerned in unjust Grievances.

We are commanded patiently to bear our *own* Injuries, and those are the proper Objects of Patience ; but we are no where commanded patiently to bear the Injuries brought upon *other* People. And therefore *Moses*, who is commended as the meekest Man upon Earth, had great Indignation for the Pressure brought upon his Brethren ; and even *slew an Egyptian*, who used one of them tyrannically.

And indeed these two things are built upon different Foundations. The Resentment or Vindicating of Injuries brought upon our selves, is built upon the Principle of *Self-Love*, which Christianity requires in many Cases to be overlooked ; but a Concern for the Injuries brought upon others, is built upon the noble Duty of *Charity*, than which none is more recommended by our great Master : and therefore whatever Patience may be required from us, either in suffering Persecution or other Injuries, this cannot of it self determine what a Man may lawfully do, or what may be his Duty to do, out of Love to his Country, and to do good to many Millions of People.

3. As for the Precepts we meet with in Scripture about Obedience to Governors, such as those I have already quoted ; *Let every Soul be subject to the Higher Powers* ; and *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake* : it must be owned , that they are the plain Voice of Nature, as well as Scripture. Common Reason tells us , that it must be the Will of our Great Creator that Mankind should live under Government ; because , generally speaking , they could neither live in Peace nor Quiet , nor in *Godliness and Honesty* without it. Government therefore is *God's Ordinance* , and Subjection a Natural Duty arising from it ; but as to the particular Measures of this Subjection , we cannot certainly judge of them by such general Words as those we have in Scripture , but they must be determined either by the Nature , End , and Design of Government in general , or from the Nature of the Constitution of every Nation in particular. Practical Precepts of the Scriptures differ in this from Speculative Points : Matters of Speculation or Doctrine are not altered by Circumstances , but remain in their general Nature unvariable thro all Ages and Countries , and therefore are intirely to be judged of by the Scriptures themselves : But as for Practical Precepts , when they come to be put in practice , they admit of such infinite Variety of Circumstances , that many other things besides the general Rule must be brought in , to help us to judge of the Lawfulness or Unlawfulness of particular Actions. And this is the Method of all those who write about Cases of Conscience. The Scripture commanded that no Person should eat the *Shew-Bread* , but the *Priests alone* ; yet *David* judg'd this was intended as a Restraint in a Case of great Necessity ; and our *Saviour* has since justify'd him in it. God commanded that *no manner of Work* should be done on the *Sabbath-Day* ; yet

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yet common Reason has excepted Cases of *Necessity* and *Mercy*: and our Saviour has given us a general Rule of judging in such Cases; *The Sabbath was made for Man, and not Man for the Sabbath*, Mark 2. 27. Thus our Saviour commands, that we should *give to every one that asks*, and lend to every one that would borrow of us; but common Reason easily tells us that nothing more can be meant by this, but that we should be very charitable.

And the same may be said as to the general Rules of Obedience to all sorts of Superiors. Thus Children are commanded to *obey their Parents in all things*, Coloss. 3. 20. but I believe in *England* nobody understands by this, that if a Son has an Estate left him, or has got one by his Industry, he is bound at his Father's Command to give it up to him. And the same may be said as to the Obedience of *Wives to Husbands*. The Scripture commands *Wives to be obedient to their own Husbands in every thing, as the Church is to Christ*; Eph. 5. 22, 23, 24. which Words, if taken strictly, make the one half of the World absolute Slaves to the other. And I would take notice, that in this Case there are two Considerations, that seem to lay the Obligation stricter than in any of the general Precepts of Submission to Government.

The first is, that they are commanded to be obedient in *every thing*, and *as the Church is to Christ*: Whereas no such Precept occurs in all the Scripture with respect to Government. All Persons indeed are commanded to be obedient, but are nowhere commanded to be obedient to it in every thing. And, in the next place, the Scripture tells us, that the *Woman was made for Man, and not the Man for the Woman*; 1 Cor. 11. 9. whereas it is a known Truth, that Government was
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not made for the sake of Princes, but they and their Office were made for the Good of the People which are governed : Notwithstanding both which Particulars, Good-nature and Justice too have made the wisest Men interpret, that the Obedience due from Wives to Husbands is only such as is agreeable to the Nature of Marriage, where the *Woman* is made *one Flesh* with the *Man*, and Partner in his Fortunes ; and our Laws themselves suppose, that there are some degrees of ill Usage, which will justify a Woman in refusing Obedience to her Husband as long as they live.

That which I intend by all this, is to observe, that, besides the General Rules of Scripture, many other things are to be taken into Consideration to judge of the Nature and Measure of Obedience to Princes ; and particularly the Nature and Kind of the Government it self, which I now proceed to consider.

4. Where the Prince has the full Power of the Kingdom in him, and can make, alter, or abrogate Laws at pleasure ; there, tho the People have still a Right to be governed, and not to be destroyed, yet they cannot claim a Right to be governed this or that particular way ; That is in the Pleasure of the Prince, and Obedience is due from the Subject accordingly. It is true indeed, that no Prince has Power to commit Acts of Violence, or to make barbarous or oppressive Laws, as no Judge has the Power of Judging unjustly : Yet, as in the Case of a Judge, if he has Jurisdiction in the Cause, and be in a Supreme Court, from which there is no Appeal, tho he should judge unjustly, it is considered in the Law as a Case adjudged, and no Remedy to be had against it ; so if a Prince act with full Power, tho he should

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should act unjustly and oppressively; it's a hard matter to say what Remedy there is for the Subject at least unless the Case come to be plainly intolerable. But this is a Question, that, blessed be God, We are not concerned in, and therefore I shall determine nothing in it, leaving such unhappy People to stand or fall to their own Masters; and shall proceed to a Case that more nearly concerns our selves, which is that of a Mixed or Limited Monarchy.

A Monarchy may be called *Limited*, chiefly upon these two Accounts: The first is, when the Prince can neither raise Money, nor make, or alter, or dispense with Laws, without the Consent and Authority of the States of the Kingdom: and in consequence of this, in the second place, that the Actions of such a Prince, against the Law, are null and void. Sometimes indeed even Arbitrary Princes do by their Laws declare, That if Things are not done in such and such a Manner even by themselves, they shall be null and void: But those Laws proceeding merely from their own Power, may be dispensed with, or altered at their Pleasure, and are not designed to tie up the Hands of such Princes; but to prevent Surprise, and proceeding without good Advice; and therefore are in truth no Limitation of the Monarchy.

But the Case is otherwise, where the Law proceeds from the *Authority* of others as well as the the Prince: There no one Person has Authority to break or alter that which was done by common Consent: and the People of such a State have not only a general Right to Protection, which is the end of all Government; but they have a Right to be protected and governed according to those Laws to which they gave their own Consent. Such a Limited

mitted Monarch has however this great Advantage in governing, That so long as he does not set himself above the Laws, but is willing to govern by them, tho' it should be with many Frailties and Mistakes, yet he seems to be the most clearly *Irresistible* of any Prince in the World: because, as he acts so far with Full and Supreme Authority, so it cannot be suppos'd, that Laws, made by Common Consent of a Kingdom, should ever be so far prejudicial to it, as in any respect to justify Resistance in the Execution of them.

But if such a Prince shall think fit to do as King *James* did, set himself above the Laws, claim and exercise a Power of Dispensing with them at pleasure; leave all Legal Securities at mercy, govern by Officers that have no Legal Commissions, and consequently no Power; raise an Army, in time of Peace, without Consent of Parliament, to subdue and terrify his Subjects, Be a professed Enemy to the Religion Established by Law; and in consequence of all this, bring the Subjects under just Apprehension of the saddest Calamities that can befall them: In a word, instead of a *Protector*, he becomes an *Invader*, and so far be neither the *Ordinance of God*, nor the *Ordinance of Man*; What may Subjects lawfully do in such a Case as this is?

As to this I answer, That this is a Case of mere civil Consideration, and must be determined by the Nature of the Constitution of the Kingdom, and the natural Reason of Mankind; which tells us what People may do when they are *Invaded*, and invaded against *Law* and *Right*, and like to be utterly undone by the Invasion.

This is a Case nowhere mentioned in the Scriptures,

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tures, nor in any of the Antient Fathers of the Church, nor meddled with any where by any publick Authority of the Church of *England*: And indeed this cannot be a Matter of *Doctrine* of any Church, because it cannot be determined by the Scripture, which is the sole Rule the Church ought to go by in Matters of Doctrine; and because no Church has any thing to do to determine of the Nature, Result, and Consequences of Civil Rights.

This is indeed a Case of Conscience; but the Rule of Conscience, and the Rule of Faith, are very different Things. The Scripture is the Rule of our Faith, and of our Manners too, so far as they depend upon mere Revelation: but there are many other Duties that Conscience is concerned in, which must be determined by the Force of Natural Reason, by the Law and the Constitution of our Country, and the peculiar Circumstances of the Case; of which sort this, that I have now been speaking of, is plainly one: and any Church may as well pretend to determine all Matters of Justice, brought before our Courts (because Cases of Conscience are one way or other concerned in them) as it can to determine in this Matter.

Give me leave to add, in the last place, That this Doctrine of Unlimited Passive Obedience has not in Fact tended to the Peace of the World, which is the only good Pretence for it; but, on the contrary, those Countries, where it has been most talked of, have been most imbroiled. Among those that are not Christians, none have carry'd the pretence of Suffering with profound Submission so high as the *Turks*, who yet, within these last hundred Years, have deposed more of their Princes, than all this part of the World beside. Among Christians it has no where
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been talked of so much as in this Country, for a hundred Years last past, and we all know the Confusion that we have been in ever since; whereas most other Countrys, that have talked moderately of this Matter, have been at peace and quiet.

Whether it be that this encourages Princes to strain their Power, and do exorbitant things; or whether it has raised incurable Fears, and Jealousies, and Suspicions in the Minds of Subjects, or, as will often happen, created immoderate Opposition the other way; or whether all these together be not the Causes of it, I will not determine: so far is certain, That this does not represent Government in its amiable View, as a kind Protector, and as designed by God's Providence for our Good; but rather represents it as a terrible Monster, that can devour us if it will, and may do it safely if it pleases; And such a Representation as this must sometimes raise Fears of Danger when there is none, and create such dreadful Suspicions, as shall not be in the power either of Reason or Religion to conquer. And therefore the Scriptures take a quite contrary Method; when they command us to be subject to Princes, they give such Reasons as render Government amiable; that the *Prince is the Minister of God to us for good*; that *Governors are sent for the Punishment of Evil doers, and for the Praise of them that do well*: but they never once put the terrible Case, That they may not be resisted, tho it be to save a Nation from Destruction.

Let us therefore imitate the Scripture in this, let us teach our People that Government is the *Ordinance of God*, for the great Good of Mankind; that the Blessings of Peace and Quiet, which we en-

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joy under it, are the greatest Blessings of Life that if the Government be disturbed, we must lose all this; and that Rapine and Plunder, Murder and Bloodshed will succeed in the room of them: Let us teach them to subdue all their inordinate Passions, all Anger, and Pride, Ambition and Discontent, all Thoughts of Revenge against Governors, because they cannot have their Will of them, because they cannot obtain such Places of Honour or Profit as they think they deserve; And tell them withal, that if they do resist their Governors upon these or any other inordinate Passions whatever, they are guilty of *Rebellion*, and *Perjury*, and *Murder*, and must answer to God for all the sad Effects that are like to follow from it.

If these things were well inculcated, Governors generally speaking might be very safe, and the World very quiet, without putting hard Cases, that are in themselves unnatural, that tend to provoke and exasperate; and which, however People may talk of them when they are at Ease and Quiet, always have been seen through, and always will be seen through, when they shall really happen, and any probable Means of Deliverance appear.

I have insisted thus long upon these Particulars, to vindicate the Memory of our Glorious Deliverer King W I L L I A M, and of those Noble Patriots that join'd with him to accomplish our Deliverance, and to shew the Wisdom and Lawfulness of the Settlement that was then made; and in consequence of that, of the Settlement that was made upon our present Gracious King and his Family, in opposition

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position to all Popish Pretenders whatever. And I have particular shewn, that no Doctrine of the Church of *England* is concerned in this matter; that I may, if possible, undeceive those, who out of respect to our Church, are taking the most effectual Measures to ruine and destroy it.

Give me leave to add, That it is the clear Law of our Country, that the King and Parliament may, for wise Reasons, alter the Succession of the Crown. And this Advantage we have from our happy Constitution above most Arbitrary Monarchies; where tho the Prince has the Absolute Supreme Power, yet he is limited in the manner of holding it, and is bound to deliver it down to the next Successor

Grot. de Jure
Pacis & Bell.
lib. 2. c. 6.

appointed by the Original Law and Constitution; at least if he do not consult the Kingdom again in the matter, which such Monarchs generally have no settled legal way of doing. Whereas with us the States of the Kingdom must frequently be call'd together; and when they join their Authority in any such great Emergency as this, there is then the same full Authority in Altering, that could be in the original Making of any Law whatsoever. And if it be done for wise and good Reasons, those Princes who come in upon that Alteration are *Rightful* and *Lawful* Princes.

I shall therefore apply my self to all that hear me, in the Words of my Text; *My Son, fear thou the Lord and the King, and meddle not with those that are given to Change.*

In the first place, let us *fear the Lord*, and the sad Judgments which we have reason to expect from him, both in this World and the other, if we venture

22 A Sermon preach'd before the

venture to join in Rebellion against our Gracious King, who is *God's Minister*, and who (if ever any Prince was) is the *Minister of God to us for Good*. A Prince settled among us by Numbers of Laws made in the two preceding Reigns, and made upon the wisest and weightiest Reasons that any Law could be made; and who, since he came among us, has carried himself as a kind Protector, and Friend to our Constitution in Church and State. A Prince that may apply to the People of *England*, as *Samuel* did to the People of *Israel*, *Whose Ox have I taken, or whose Ass have I taken?* A Prince indeed that is the very *Breath of our Nostrils*; with whose Government our Religion, and Liberties, and all that is dear to us, must stand or fall.

In the next place, let us *fear the Lord*, and his Judgments, that are like to befall us if we venture to break those Oaths, which most of us have solemnly made, and frequently repeated in *His Name*, and in *His Presence*. It is now about fourteen Years since the *Oath of Abjuration* of the Pretender has been appointed by Law to be taken by all that sit in either House of Parliament, by all the Clergy, and by all Officers Civil or Military; and it has accordingly been taken from time to time: and a great part of the Nation have taken it even since the Rise of the Rebellion in behalf of the Pretender. Here has been both a long Time, and a great Occasion given to consider well of the matter: and therefore all those who after this shall venture to break this Oath, have the greatest reason to expect the Curse of God, which they have imprecated upon themselves, and which God has denounced against all that *swear falsely by his Name*: *The Curse of God*, says the Prophet, *shall enter into the House of him that sweareth falsely by my Name; and it shall remain in the midst of his House,*

House of Lords, Jan. 30. 1715. 23

House, and shall consume it, with the Timber thereof,
and with the Stones thereof. Zech. 5. 4.

It must be a melancholy thing, to see any of our
Countrymen thus expose themselves to the *Curse*
of God ; but however there is at least this Comfort
in it, that we have reason to expect they will carry
this *Curse* along with them into the *Cause* they e-
spouse, which will be a *dead Weight* upon it, and
at last sink it.

In a word, every Protestant who has taken the
Oaths, and shall after that favour this Rebellion, en-
gages against His King, against his Oaths, against
his Religion, and against his Country, at the same
time. He involves his Country in Blood and Rapine,
and all the Miseries and Calamities of War, only to
undo it if he succeeds, and to intail upon it all those
heavy Judgments which a Succession of Popish Princes
always have brought, and always must bring upon
Protestant Countries.

I shall conclude all in the Words of *Ezra*, with a
little Variation : If after so many Deliverances as God
has given us from Popery, we shall now join to
bring it upon our selves ; If we shall join in Affini-
ty with the People of these Abominations, will not
God be angry with us till he has consumed us, so
that there shall be no Remnant nor Escaping ?

F I N I S.

It must be a melancholy thing, to see any of our
 Of God: but however there is at least this Comfort
 in it, that we have reason to expect they will carry
 this Cause along with them into the Court: they co-
 operate, which will be a great Weight upon it, and
 at last sink it.

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